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CHAUCEr AND DANTE

It is the purpose of this article to present a number of Chaucer's borrowings from Dante that have not (I believe) hitherto been pointed out. Even more, however, the paper is concerned with an attempt to weigh the significance of the phenomena observed. For one thing, a study of the way in which the borrowings seem actually to have come about affords, in a number of instances, peculiarly interesting results.¹ Some light is thrown, moreover, upon the sources of Chaucer's classical information. That information was undoubtedly derived, to a considerable degree, from his reading of the Latin classics themselves in the original. But some of it seems very clearly to have come through the medium of French;² part of it by way of the commentaries current in the Middle Ages;³ and a good deal of it (as what follows will perhaps make clear)⁴ underwent significant modification through the influence of Dante. Again, the recurrence, in two or more poems, of reminiscences of Dante in close conjunction with borrowings, in each instance, from the same writers may now and then carry chronological implications of some value. And finally, the distribution of the passages from Dante, both in the *Divine Comedy* itself and in Chaucer, is a subject of the first importance.

¹ See especially §§ 1, 4, 11 below.

² See *The Nation*, CIII, No. 2686 (December 21, 1916), pp. 2-3 (Supplement), for a preliminary statement of some of the considerations which underlie this conclusion.

³ See especially § 11 below.

⁴ See in particular §§ 1, 4-14, below.

It was my original intention to follow this paper with another, in which all the other borrowings from Dante that have been recognized should be brought together, and treated in a somewhat similar fashion. The materials, however, have far outgrown the limits of an article, and will instead be included in a brief volume. This paper becomes, accordingly, a preliminary study toward that.

§ 1

Probably the most characteristic fact about Chaucer's borrowings in general is the way in which he incessantly fuses recollections of two or more bits of his reading into a *tertium quid* of his own. The following passage affords an illuminating glimpse into his mental processes by disclosing the underlying association of ideas.

In the *Parlement of Foules* (ll. 288 ff.) Chaucer has reached, in his imitation of the long passage from the seventh book of the *Teseide*, Boccaccio's sixty-second stanza.¹ I shall set side by side with this stanza *Inferno*, V, 58-69, and Chaucer's own lines.

Videvi storie per tutto dipinte,
 In tra le qua' con più alto lavoro
 Della sposa di Nin vidde distinte
 L'opere tutte, e vidde a piè del moro
 Piramo e Tisbe, e già le gelse tinte:
 E 'l grand' Ercole vidde tra costoro
 In grembo a Jole, e Bibli dolorosa
 Andar pregando Cauno pietosa.²

'Ell' è *Semiramis*, di cui si legge
 Che succedette a *Nino*, e fu sua sposa:
 Tenne la terra che il Soldan corregge.
 L'altra è colei, che s'ancise amorosa,
 E ruppe fede al cener di *Sicheo*;
 Poi è *Cleopatras* lussuriosa.
Elena vedi, per cui tanto reo
 Tempo si volse, e vedi il grande *Achille*,
 Che con amore al fine combatteo.
 Vedi *Paris*, *Tristano*'; e più di mille
 Ombre mostrommi e nominommi a dito,
 Che amor di nostra vita dipartille.³

¹ See *Oxford Chaucer*, I, 72.

² *Tes.*, VII, 62. I am following here the text of the Moutier edition, not that which Skeat (sometimes incorrectly) gives.

³ *Inf.*, V, 58-69. I quote from the *Oxford Dante*.

Semyramus, Candace, and *Ercules*,
Biblis, **Dido**, *Tisbe* and *Piramus*,
Tristram, Isoude, **Paris**, and **Achilles**,
Eleyne, **Cleopatre**, and Troilus,
 Silla, and eek the moder of Romulus—
 Alle these were peynted on that other syde,
 And al hir love, *and in what plyte they dyde*.¹

What has happened is clear at a glance, when one compares the three passages. Boccaccio, in his third line ("Della sposa di Nin"), is echoing Dante ("Che succedette a Nino, e fu sua sposa"). But Chaucer knew the passage in Dante, too, and Boccaccio's phrase served to recall it to his memory.² The result is that he combines Boccaccio's and Dante's lists into one. Not only is every lover in the *Teseide* stanza included (through one at least of each pair), *but every name in Dante's list as well*.³ And the last line of Chaucer's stanza is drawn from Dante's sixty-ninth line.⁴

Dante's characterization of Semiramis has left its mark on at least two other passages in Chaucer, of which one has already been recognized, the other not. Carey pointed out that B 3667—

His lustes were al lawe in his decree—

translates *Inf.*, V, 56 (two lines before the passage quoted above):

Che libito fe' licito in sua legge.⁵

In this case the phrase is transferred by Chaucer from Semiramis to Nero. But there can be little doubt, I think, that another line in Dante's description suggested, by an interesting association of

¹ *PF.*, 288-94.

² A precisely similar association of ideas, leading to a corresponding transition from Boccaccio to Dante, occurs earlier in the same section of the *Parlement* (ll. 190-203), in which Chaucer is following *Tes.*, VII, 52-53. In lines 201-3 he passes over to *Purg.*, XXVII, 7-10, 14-18. See Toynbee, *Dante in English Literature*, p. 5, for note of the borrowing. I shall discuss its connections later.

³ The names common to Chaucer and Boccaccio are in italics, those common to Chaucer and Dante in bold-faced type. Chaucer adds (from among the "più di mille ombre") Candace, Troilus, Scylla, and Rhea Silvia. Isoude, of course, belongs with Tristan. Toynbee (*Dante Studies and Researches*, p. 251) quotes Chaucer's stanza in illustration of Dante's linking of Paris of Troy and Tristan, without observing that Chaucer is himself directly drawing upon Dante.

⁴ For the reason why Dante puts Semiramis among those who died for love, see Toynbee, *Dante Studies and Researches*, p. 321.

⁵ See also Toynbee, *Dante in Eng. Lit.*, p. 12; *Dante Studies and Researches*, p. 128, n. 3. Chaucer's threefold "lustes . . . lawe . . . decree" corresponds to Dante's "libito . . . licito . . . legge" rather than to Orosius' twofold "libitum . . . liberum" ("ut cuique libitum esset liberum fieret," *Hist. adv. Paganos*, I, 4, § 8).

ideas, a well-known phrase in the *Man of Law's Tale*. Semiramis, in the *Inferno*,

Tenne la terra, che il Soldan corregge.¹

Chaucer's transition, accordingly, from

O sowdanesse, rote of iniquitee,

to

Virago, thou *Semyram the secounde*,²

is a natural one.³

§ 2

The words of Africanus in the *Parlement of Foules*—

. . . hit stondeth writen in thy face,

Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me⁴—

have long been felt to be a borrowing from Dante. Ten Brink remarked: "Die parallelstelle in der *Commedia* weisz ich augenblicklich nicht zu finden; doch wird deren eindruck jedem meiner leser gegenwärtig sein."⁵ Klaeber refers the lines to *Par.*, XXIV, 41:

Non t' è occulto, perchè il viso hai quivi.⁶

But a glance at the context shows that all connection is wanting. Toynbee quotes the passage,⁷ but gives no reference for these particular lines.

The words, of course, might well be Chaucer's response to a vague impression very similar to Ten Brink's, for Virgil's and Beatrice's trick of reading Dante's unspoken thoughts is one of the commonplaces of the *Commedia*.⁸ But it is clear, I think, as has never been pointed out, that Chaucer had a very definite passage in mind. The stanza immediately preceding the lines of the *Parlement* is as follows:

Right as, betwixen adamauntes two
Of even might, a pece of iren y-set,
That hath no might to meve to ne fro—

¹ L. 60, above.

² B 358–59.

³ Skeat has already called attention to the probable connection of Chaucer's "Sitheo" in *Leg.*, 1005, and Dante's "Sicheo" in *Inf.*, V, 62 (above). And the possibility that Dante's form "Cleopatras" (l. 63) has influenced Chaucer's "Cleopataras" (*Leg.*, 582, 601), "Cleopatras" (*Leg.*, 604) should not be overlooked. See also below, § 8.

⁴ *PF.*, 155–56.

⁵ *Studien*, p. 126.

⁶ *Das Bild bei Chaucer*, pp. 156, 344. He also compares *Par.*, XXVI, 103 ff.

⁷ *Dante in Eng. Lit.*, p. 4.

⁸ See especially *Inf.*, XXIII, 25–29; *Purg.*, XV, 127–29.

For what that on may hale, that other let—
 Ferde I, that niste whether me was bet
 To entre or leve, til African my gyde
 Me hente, and shoof in at the gates wyde,

And seyde, '*hit stondeth writen in thy face,*
Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me.'¹

Here are the opening lines of the fourth canto of the *Paradiso*:

Intra due cibi, distanti e moventi
 D'un modo, prima si morria di fame,
 Che liber' uomo l'un recasse ai denti.
 Sì si starebbe un agno intra due brame
 Di fieri lupi, egualmente temendo;
 Sì si starebbe un cane intra due dame.
 Per che, s'io mi tacea, me non riprendo,
 Dalli miei dubbi d'un modo sospinto,
 Poich' era necessario, nè commendo.
Io mi tacea, ma il mio disir dipinto
M'era nel viso, e il domandar con ello
*Più caldo assai, che per parlar distinto.*²

For the threefold figure of the man between two foods, the lamb between two wolves, and the dog between two hinds, Chaucer has substituted the figure of the iron between two magnets, followed by a close paraphrase of the immediately succeeding words in Dante—"thyn *errour*" harking back to "li miei *dubbi*" of Dante's figure, rather than to "il mio *disir*" of its application. And the connection of the lines with their respective contexts establishes definitely Chaucer's source.³ This, in turn, it may be remarked, demonstrates Chaucer's knowledge of the *Paradiso* when he wrote the *Parlement of Foules*.⁴

¹ *PF.*, 139-56.

² *Par.*, IV, 1-12. Compare also ll. 16-18:

E disse: '*Io veggio ben come ti tira*
Uno ed altro disio,' etc.

³ In the lines that immediately follow (*PF.*, 157-58) Chaucer returns—as has not, I think, been observed—to the third canto of the *Inferno*, and recalls Virgil's reassurance of Dante in ll. 127-29. The same canto of the *Inferno* is also drawn upon, as has long been recognized, in *PF.*, 127-40 = *Inf.*, III, 1 ff.; *PF.*, 169-70 = *Inf.*, III, 19-20.

⁴ The idea that Chaucer pegged slowly through the *Divine Comedy* for a period of months or even years has always seemed a rather curious one. It isn't likely that he read it at a sitting. On the other hand, there is no reason to suppose that, once having begun it, he would not go straight through it within a comparatively short time. I, for instance, have read it twice within the last two months (and the *Teseide* twice into the bargain) in the intervals of other more or less exacting occupations, and I am very sure that Chaucer knew Italian better than I.

§ 3

The following well-known lines from the *Troilus* should be added to Chaucer's borrowings from the *Convivio*:¹

Ye knowe eek, that *in forme of speche is chaunge*
With-inne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho
That hadden prys, now wonder nyce and straunge
*Us thinketh hem.*²

The first two lines are clearly suggested by *Convivio*, I, v, 55-66:

Onde vedemo nelle città d'Italia, se bene volemo agguardare, a cinquanta anni da qua *molti vocaboli essere spenti e nati e variati; onde se 'l piccolo tempo così trasmuta, molto più trasmuta lo maggiore*. Sicch' io dico, che se coloro che partiro di questa vita, *già sono mille anni*, tornassono alle loro cittadi, crederebbono quelle essere occupate da gente *strana* per la lingua da loro discordante.³

The rest of the passage comes from Horace by way of the *Convivio*:

E luce or di qua or di là, in tanto quanto certi vocaboli, certe declinazioni, certe costruzioni sono in uso, che già non furono, e molte già furono, che ancor saranno; siccome dice Orazio nel principio della *Poetria*, quando dice: 'Molti vocaboli rinasceranno, che già caddero,' ec.⁴

Dante is quoting *Ars Poetica*, ll. 70-71:

Multi renascentur, quae jam cecidere, *cadentque*
*Quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus.*⁵

The line (*T. & C.*, II, 21) immediately preceding the stanza under consideration—"A blind man can nat juggen wel in hewis"—also occurs in Dante, in direct connection with a discussion of *words*. It is in *De Vulg. Eloq.*, II, vi, 27: "Pudeat ergo, pudeat idiotas tantum audere deinceps ut ad cantiones prorumpant; quos non aliter deridemus *quam caecum de coloribus distinguentem*." Dante is discussing the arrangement of words in the *canzone* (which, as he has

¹ See the article of the present writer in *Mod. Phil.*, XIII, 19 ff.

² *T. & C.*, II, 22-25.

³ Compare *De Vulg. Eloq.*, I, ix, 66-70. Ten Brink (*Studien*, p. 83) compares Chaucer's observation with the lines in *De Vulg. Eloq.* (I, ix, 60-66) immediately preceding those to which I have just referred. But the passage in the *Convivio*, quite apart from the identifying phrase "*già sono mille anni*," is far closer to Chaucer's idea.

⁴ *Convivio*, II, xiv, 83-89.

⁵ Skeat recognized the quotation (as have others), with the comment: "Probably borrowed at second hand." But he did not identify the source. See Moore, *Studies in Dante*, I, 197, for Dante's use of the same passage in *Par.*, XXVI, 137-38.

already stated in the fourth chapter, must deal with “*salus, amor, et virtus*”), and the succeeding chapter is the famous one which presents his classification of words. It is tempting, in view of the context, to suppose that Dante’s use of the phrase suggested Chaucer’s. But the line is a proverb of wide currency;¹ there is no conclusive evidence that Chaucer read the *De Vulg. Eloq.*; and without surer grounds the parallel cannot safely be regarded as more than a coincidence.

§ 4

In the stanza of Book III of the *Troilus* beginning with line 1373 Chaucer is translating *Filostrato*, III, 38:

Deh pensin qui *gli dolorosi avari*
Che biasiman chi è innamorato, etc.

The corresponding lines in Chaucer are:

Lord! trowe ye, a *coveitous*, a wrecche,
That blameth love and holt of it despyt, etc.

Chaucer follows Boccaccio through the next stanza (*T. & C.*, 1380–86 = *Fil.*, III, 39) and then leaves the *Filostrato* altogether for the moment. The lines which he interpolates (1387–93) are as follows:

As wolde god, the wrecches, that dispyse
Seryse of love, hadde eres al-so longe
As hadde *Myda*, ful of *coveityse*;
And ther-to dronken hadde as hoot and stronge
As *Crassus* dide for his *affectis wronge*, etc.

As in the case of the Semiramis passage,² so here a perfectly natural association of ideas has carried Chaucer from Boccaccio to Dante. “*Gli dolorosi avari*” recalls the Fifth Circle of Purgatory, in which the avaricious and prodigal expiate their sins. In Canto XX of the *Purgatorio* Hugh Capet gives, at the close of his long discourse, the list of examples of avarice which the weeping souls rehearse at night:

Noi ripetiam *Pigmalion allotta* . . .
E la miseria dell’*avar*o *Mida*,
Che seguì alla sua domanda ingorda,
Per la qual sempre convien che si rida.³

¹ See Kittredge, *Mod. Phil.*, VII, 477–78.

² See above, § 1.

³ *Purg.*, XX, 103, 106–8.

Achan, Ananias and Sapphira, Heliodorus, and Polymnestor are then named:

Ultimamente ci si grida: "*Crasso,
Dicci, chè il sai, di che sapore è l'oro?*"¹

Without question, Chaucer had other sources of information regarding both Midas and Crassus. For Midas *RR.*, I, 360,² and *Met.*, XI, 100 ff., were available. But Professor Kittredge has pointed out³ that *RR.* does not speak of the Golden Touch. On the other hand, although it is true, as Kittredge suggests, that covetousness appears in *Met.*, XI, 118-19, 132, 136, 141, it is there only *implied*.⁴ In Dante it is both explicit and fundamental. And of course neither *RR.* nor Ovid places Midas and Crassus in juxtaposition. As for Crassus, Chaucer may well have known the account of his death in Florus:

Aurum enim liquidum in rictum oris infusum est, ut cujus animus arserat auri cupiditate, ejus etiam mortuum et exsangue corpus auro ureretur.⁵

And there is evidence, the statement of which belongs to a later discussion, that Chaucer may also have known a passage in *Li Hystore de Julius Cesar* of Jehan de Tuim:

Crassus fu envoies en Arrabe selonc l'usage de Rome pour conkester sour Turs et sour Arrabiens; si avint k'il fu ochis ensi com vous ores: pour cou k'il estoit trop convoitous sour avoir, li Ture li fisent or fondut avaler ou cors parmi le bouche *si caut com il estoit*,⁶ et en tel maniere fu Crassus ochis.⁷

Since, as it has been remarked, it is Chaucer's consistent habit to blend reminiscences of a variety of passages, he may of course have done so here.⁸

¹ *Purg.*, XX, 116-17. Klaeber (*op. cit.*, p. 193) compares these last lines with *T. & C.*, III, 1388-91, but only with reference to Crassus.

² Ed. Michel.

³ *PMLA*, XXIV, 352, n. 14.

⁴ It is explicit in Mythogr. III, cap. 10, § 8 (Bode, *Scriptores Rerum Mythicarum*, I, 227).

⁵ *Epitome*, I, 46, § 11. Cf. *Anticlaudianus*, II, v (*Satirical Poets of Twelfth Cent.*, Rolls Series, II, 300): "Non auri potum sitiens, non ebrius auro, Aurum potasset Crassus, male potus in auro."

⁶ Cf. "And ther-to dronken hadde as *hoot* and stronge." But see also Florus' "ureretur."

⁷ Ed. Settegast, pp. 5-6.

⁸ Midas' ass's ears, for example, are not mentioned in Dante.

The juxtaposition of Midas and Crassus, however, under the head of Avarice, and the employment of Dante's form "Mida"¹ constitute strong presumptive evidence in favor of the dominant influence of Dante. Moreover, Chaucer draws upon a passage from the previous canto of the *Purgatorio* (XIX, 4-5) only twenty-six lines farther on (*T. & C.*, III, 1419-20).² And finally the phrase "for his *affectis wronge*" is conclusive. Not only is "affect" (which Chaucer seems to use only here)³ a characteristically Dantean word, but it occurs twice (XVII, 111; XVIII, 57) in the fundamental discussion in Cantos XVII and XVIII of the *Purgatorio* concerning the nature of love. Crassus' "affectis wronge" represent love "*quando al mal si torce*" (XVII, 100), and Chaucer's use of the phrase shows his complete assimilation of Dante's doctrine. The passage has therefore an interest far beyond that of a mere passing recollection of a pair of names.

It is interesting to observe that this same passage in Dante influenced in similar fashion both Petrarch and Boccaccio. In the *Triumphus famae* (I, 55-57) occurs the following:

Un Curio, ed un Fabritio, assai più belli
Con la lor povertà *che Mida o Crasso*
Con l'oro, onde a virtù furon rebelli.⁴

That Petrarch has Dante in mind is proved by the mention of Fabricius, who is the first example of poverty in Canto XX of the *Purgatorio* (ll. 25-27). The same juxtaposition occurs in the *Amorosa Visione* (XIII, 5-12):

Vi vid'io *Mida*, in vista che sazia
Saria di tutto appena possedente:
Non bastandoli avere avuta grazia
Dagl' iddii, che ciò che e' toccasse
Ritornasse oro ver senza fallazia.
Di dietro a lui pareo che ne tirasse
Giù *Marco Crasso* assai, avvegnadio
Che della bocca ancor li traboccasse.

¹ See also D 951, 953. This form also occurs as a nominative in Mythogr. II, cap. 117 (Bode, I, 114): "Mida rex," etc.

² See *Oxford Chaucer*, VI, 404.

³ This is also the only occurrence of the word in this sense recorded by the *NED* up to 1528. As contrasted with "chere" it occurs in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, l. 5486. In the *Romaunt* Skeat has emended the manuscript, and reads "effect," which may be right. See his note on the line.

⁴ Ed. Appel, Halle, 1901.

The inclusion of Polymnestor (l. 35) and Pygmaleon (l. 44) shows that Boccaccio is also following Dante (cf. *Purg.*, XX, 103, 115). There is, however, in neither case any verbal correspondence with Chaucer's lines.

§ 5

The Legend of Hypsipyle and Medea is drawn in the main from Guido and Ovid. But Chaucer had not forgotten (as it is difficult to think that he could forget) the Jason who appeared to Dante along the first valley of Malebolge—"nor appeared Less than Archangel ruined." Chaucer's reminiscences are colored by the scornful context in which he sets them, but they are unmistakable.

Il buon Maestro, senza mia domanda,
 Mi disse: 'Guarda quel grande che viene,
 E per dolor non par lagrima spanda:
Quanto aspetto reale ancor ritiene!
 Quelli è Jason, che per core e per senno
 Li Colchi del monton privati fene. . . .
Ivi con senno e con parole ornate
 Isifile ingannò, la giovinetta
 Ed anco di Medea si fa vendetta.
 Con lui sen va chi da tal parte inganna.¹

Now was Jasoun a semely man with-alle,
 And lyk a lord, and had a greet renoun,
And of his loke as real as leoun,
*And goodly of his speche, and famulere.*²

Compare also:

Thou madest thy reclaiming and *thy lures*
 To ladies of *thy statly apparaunce*,
 And of *thy wordes, farced with plesaunce.*³

Finally, the line:

Have at thee, Jasoun! *now thyn horn is blowe!*⁴

translates the fifth line of the next canto of the *Inferno*:

Or convien *che per voi suoni la tromba.*⁵

¹ *Inf.*, XVIII, 82-87, 91-92, 96-97.

² *Leg.*, 1603-6.

³ *Leg.*, 1371-72.

⁴ *Leg.*, 1383.

⁵ *Inf.*, XIX, 5. This last parallel was pointed out by Klaeber, *op. cit.*, pp. 152, 380, and especially p. 405. The reference in Dante's phrase, as Scartazzini observes, is to

§ 6

Juno's anger against the Thebans and Trojans was a commonplace in many of the classical writers whom Chaucer knew. But (as has already been said) to a far greater degree than has been adequately recognized, Dante's concise and pregnant phraseology seems to have influenced Chaucer, even in his allusions to matters with which he was certainly familiar from his Latin reading. The following is a case in point.

Now, blisful lord, so *cruel* thou ne be
Unto the blood of *Troye*, I preye thee,
As *Juno was un-to the blood Thebane*.¹

Nel tempo *che Junone era crucciata*
Per Semelè *contra il sangue tebano*
Ma nè di *Tebe* furie nè *Troiane*
Si vider mai in alcun *tanto crude*, etc.²

Whatever knowledge Chaucer may have had of the subject from other sources, his phraseology shows unmistakably the influence of Dante.

The same influence is also clear in *KT.*, 1329-31:

And eek thurgh Juno, *jalous* and eek *wood*,
That hath destroyed wel ny al the *blood*
Of *Thebes*.

There is no directly corresponding passage in the *Teseide*.³

§ 7

The phrase about "the blood Thebane" is of no great importance, except so far as it shows the unexpected ways in which one writer sets his stamp upon another's words. Dante's next line,

the trumpet "del banditore che strombazza i misfatti dei condannati a pubblica punizione." Chaucer's "Have at thee, Jasoun!" looks, however, as if he had understood the figure as referring to the *chase*, although the two lines preceding (*Leg.*, 1381-82) perhaps point to an understanding of its real significance. In any case, he has transferred the phrase from the Simonists to Jason, whose memory, however, persists in Canto XIX: "*Nuovo Jason sarà*" (l. 85).

¹ *T. & C.*, V, 599-601.

² *Inf.*, XXX, 1-2, 22-23. Wise (*The Influence of Statius upon Chaucer*, p. 23) refers the phrase "un-to the blood Thebane" to Dante, but does not note the extent of the parallel, which I had observed before reading his dissertation.

³ Cf. *Tes.*, III, 1, ll. 1-2; IV, 16, ll. 6-7; V, 59, ll. 7-8. Chaucer's "jalous" recalls "crucciata per Semelè," and "wood" is probably suggested by "insano" in Dante's next line but one, where it refers to Athamas. See next section below.

however, affected Chaucer in a fashion more significant. The passage just quoted from *Inferno*, XXX, proceeds as follows:

Nel tempo che Junone era crucciata
 Per Semelè contra il sangue tebano,
 Come mostrò una ed altra fiata,
Atamante divenne tanto insano
 Che, etc.¹

Lines 1534-40 of the fourth book of the *Troilus* are these:

For thilke day that I for cherissching
 Or drede of fader, or of other wight,
 Or for estat, delyt, or for weddinge
Be fals to yow, my Troilus, my knight,
 Saturnes doughter, *Juno*, thorough hir might,
As wood as Athamante do me dwelle
 Eternaly in Stix, the put of helle!

In the first three lines Chaucer is directly following Boccaccio.² Criseida's oath, however, is merely:

Ma io ti giuro *per quelle amorse*
Saette che per te m'entrar nel petto.³

The adjurations in this and the following stanzas of the *Troilus* are Chaucer's substitution for Boccaccio's rather inadequate seizing of his opportunity. Now Chaucer pretty certainly knew about Athamas from Ovid,⁴ and it is possible to account for his form "*Athamante*" on the basis of the accusative *Athamanta* of *Met.*, IV, 467, 471.⁵ Moreover, Ovid uses the phrase "Saturnia Juno" in l. 448.⁶ But Athamas in Ovid does not "dwelle eternaly in Stix," and it is by no means obvious why, if Chaucer had Ovid alone in mind, he should have chosen to refer to Athamas at all in just this connection. Both points become clear by reference to the passage of the *Inferno*. Criseyde is swearing that *she will not be false to Troilus*, and is invoking upon herself the fate of Athamas, if she is. The reference to Athamas occurs in that part of the Eighth Circle where Justice "*punisce i falsator*,"⁷ and introduces the account

¹ *Inf.*, XXX, 1-4.

³ *Ibid.*, ll. 5-6.

² *Fil.*, IV, 146, ll. 7-8.

⁴ *Met.*, IV, 447 ff.

⁵ See Kittredge, *PMLA*, XXIV, 351, n.9.

⁶ This, however, is a commonplace.

⁷ *Inf.*, XXIX, 57.

(among others) of Myrrha and Sinon, and Potiphar's wife. The connection of Athamas with Criseyde's oath is accordingly clear, if we assume that the suggestion came through Dante. Otherwise it is not. Moreover, although in Dante Atamante himself is not represented as being in Hell, the context is amply sufficient to suggest it. It is, of course, perfectly possible that Chaucer remembered, as in the case of "Marsia,"¹ both Ovid and Dante.

The reference to Styx as the "put of helle" is also without question, I think, to be referred to the influence of Dante, especially through *Inf.*, VII, 100 ff. Since this article was written, however, I have discovered that I have been anticipated in this explanation by Dr. Wise, and I shall therefore content myself with referring to his discussion.²

§ 8

Of the curious fusion of sources that underlies Chaucer's ideas regarding Hell, and of the remarkable shifting of weight among the various influences that is manifest in his later work, I shall have more to say another time.³ The suggestion, however, for one detail in the *Hous of Fame* is patent.

This Eolus anon up sterte,
And with his blakke clarioun
He gan to blasen out a soun,
*As loude as belweth wind in helle.*⁴

In the *Inferno*, Dante has entered the Second Circle:

Io venni in loco d'ogni luce muto,
Che mugghia come fa mar per tempesta
Se da contrari venti è combattuto.
La bufera infernal, che mai non resta,
Mena gli spirti con la sua rapina,
Voltando e percotendo li molesta.⁵

¹ See below, § 14.

² *The Influence of Statius upon Chaucer*, pp. 17-18. With reference to the following lines (*T. & C.*, IV, 1541-45) Dr. Wise has overlooked their real source in *Met.*, I, 192-93 (see Kittredge, *PMLA*, XXIV, 351, n. 7). And the suggestion for ll. 1548-54 came, not from Statius (see Wise, p. 19), but from Ovid (see Fansler, *Chaucer and the Roman de la Rose*, pp. 46-47.) The borrowing from Ovid may in this case have been by way of the French. But the consideration of that problem must be left until later.

³ See in part, the next section.

⁴ *HF.*, 1800-1803.

⁵ *Inf.*, V, 28-33; cf. 42, 49.

There can be no question of Chaucer's knowledge of this particular canto. The Semiramis passage (see § 1 above) is twenty lines beyond the lines just quoted. And it is from the episode of Paolo and Francesca (which also contains, of course, the famous "Nessun maggior dolore")¹ that Chaucer draws his so-called "favorite line."²

§ 9

Chaucer's conception of the Furies is marked by the recurrence of the idea of "*sorwing* ever in payne,"³ "*compleynyn* ever in pyne,"⁴ and "*languisshyn*."⁵ The stock adjectives associated with the Erinys, on the other hand, in the classical writers whom Chaucer knew, belong to an entirely different category. They are (taking them at random) *rabidus*,⁶ *saevus*,⁷ *ultrix*,⁸ *inplacabilis*,⁹ *infelix*,¹⁰ *ferus*,¹¹ *horriferens*,¹² *insanus*,¹³ *ater*,¹⁴ *crudelis*,¹⁵ *cruentus*,¹⁶ *impius*,¹⁷ *ferox*,¹⁸ *malus*,¹⁹ *torvus*,²⁰ and the like. In Jean de Meun the Furies are "en enfer justicières, Gardes félounesses et fières";²¹ they are "Les trois ribaudes félounesses, Des félounies vengeresses," and their functions are clear: "Ces trois en enfer vous atendent; Ceus lient, batent, fustent, pendent, Hurtent, hercent, escorchent, foulent, Noient, ardent, greillent et boulent."²² It is true that Chaucer must have been familiar, also, with the phrases "*tristis* Erinys,"²³ "*tristes* Dirae,"²⁴ "*tristes* Furiae,"²⁵ but the epithet *tristis* is scarcely sufficient to account for his significant emphasis upon the torture

¹ Compare *T. & C.*, III, 1625-28.

¹⁰ *Met.*, IV, 490.

² *Inf.*, V, 100.

¹¹ *Met.*, I, 241; *Theb.*, VII, 562.

³ *T. & C.*, I, 9.

¹² *Met.*, I, 725.

⁴ *T. & C.*, IV, 23.

¹³ *Met.*, XI, 14.

⁵ *F* 950.

¹⁴ *Her.*, XI, 103; *Theb.*, II, 282.

⁶ *Aen.*, VII, 451.

¹⁵ *Theb.*, VIII, 686.

⁷ *Aen.*, VII, 329; *Met.*, X, 350.

¹⁶ *Theb.*, XI, 197.

⁸ *Aen.*, IV, 474; *Theb.*, VIII, 757.

¹⁷ *Theb.*, IX, 149.

⁹ *Met.*, IV, 452.

¹⁸ *De Raptu*, II, 343.

¹⁹ *Theb.*, XI, 208.

²⁰ *Theb.*, XI, 482.

²¹ Ed. Michel, II, 200.

²² Ed. Michel, II, 289. It is possible that Chaucer's "in payne" may be due to a misunderstanding of Jean de Meun's phrase: "De son relief sunt *en grant paine* Les trois ribaudes," etc. ("to glut themselves they are at great pains"), which may have been taken to mean that the Furies are "in great torment." But that is unlikely, and in any case Jean de Meun says nothing about their endless *complaining*.

²³ *Aen.*, II, 337; *Her.*, VI, 45; *De Raptu*, I, 225.

²⁴ *Aen.*, VIII, 701.

²⁵ *De Raptu*, II, 219.

undergone by the Furies themselves and upon their lamentations under it. The explanation lies in the fact that Chaucer's conception of the Furies is colored throughout by Dante's.

Dante's unforgettable description is found in the ninth canto of the *Inferno*:

Dove in un punto furon dritte ratto
*Tre furie infernal*¹ di sangue tinte,
 Che membra femminili aveano ed atto,
 E con idre verdissime eran cinte:
 Serpentelli ceraste avean per crine
 Onde le fiere tempie eran avvinte.²
 E quei che ben conobbe le meschine
Della regina dell'eterno pianto:
 'Guarda,' mi disse, 'le feroci *Erine*.
 Questa è *Megera* dal sinistro canto:
 Quella *che piange* dal destro è *Aletto*:
Tesifone è nel mezzo:' e tacque a tanto.
 Con l'unghie si fendea ciascuna il petto;
 Batteansi a palme, e gridavan sì alto
 Ch'io mi strinsi al poeta per sospetto.³

The Invocation at the beginning of Book IV of the *Troilus* is as follows:

O ye *Herines*, Nightes doughtren three,
That endeleez compleynen ever in pyne,
Megera, Alete and eek Thesiphone.⁴

The "endeleez compleynen" paraphrases "dell'eterno pianto" (together with "che piange"); the "ever in pyne" is sufficiently accounted for by ll. 44-50; the order of the names is the same;⁵

¹ The "furie infernal . . . from Pluto sent" of A 2684-85 is Chaucer's condensation of *Tes.*, IX, 4-9 (see especially 4, ll. 5-6, and 9, l. 7). The exact phrase may have come from Dante, but it is common both in French and in Italian. See, for instance, *Eneas*, l. 1919; *Filocolo* (ed. Moutier, II, 85, foot); *Bull. Ital.*, VII, 290; etc.

² It is rather interesting that at the very point where Dante, in ll. 40-42, most definitely follows the classical conception (see Moore, *Studies in Dante*, First Series, p. 245, for his source) Chaucer shows no signs of his influence.

³ *Inf.*, IX, 37-51.

⁴ *T. & C.*, IV, 22-24.

⁵ Jean de Meun has:

Alecto et Thesiphoné,
 Car de chascune le non é,
 La tierce r'a non Megera (ed. Michel, II, 289).

On the order of the Furies see Mythogr. III, cap. 6, § 23 (Bode, I, 187): "Harum secundum Fulgentium prima Alecto . . . secunda Tisiphone . . . tertia Megaera. . . Alii tamen Megaeram secundam, Tisiphonen tertiam volunt." Chaucer's and Dante's order differs from both.

and "Alete" for "Alecto" seems to show the influence of the Italian form.¹

At the beginning of Book I of the *Troilus* Chaucer invokes Tisiphone:

Thesiphone, thou help me for t'endyte
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I wryte!

To thee clepe I, *thou godesse of torment,*
*Thou cruel Furie,*² *sorwing ever in payne;*
 Help me, that am the sorwful instrument
 That helpeth lovers, as I can, *to pleyne!*
 For wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne,
 A woful wight to han a *drery fere,*
 And, to a sorwful tale, a sory chere.³

Tisiphone is here, as in the classics, the "godesse of *torment*," the "*cruel Furie*." But the Dantean conception is even more salient in the lines. Not only is Tisiphone "*sorwing ever in payne*," but she is also to help Chaucer "*to pleyne*," and she is to be the "*drery fere*" to one who *weeps* as he writes. It is under that aspect that she is primarily invoked.

¹ Chaucer might readily enough have remembered "Herines" from his classical reading, e.g., *De Raptu*, I, 225; *Her.*, VI, 45; XI, 103; *Met.*, I, 241, 725; IV, 490; XI, 14; *Thebaid*, *passim* (see especially Wise, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13); etc. It also occurs in the *Teseide* (IX, 4, ll. 5-6; X, 75, l. 3). The essential point for this passage is the fact that Dante uses it. The note on the margin of Harl., 2392 (see *Oxford Chaucer*, II, lxxiii)—"Herine, furie infernales; unde Lucanus, me pronuba duxit Herinis"—by no means "proves that Chaucer really took the name from Lucan, *Phars.*, VIII, 90," as Skeat asserts. The context in Lucan is totally different, and the gloss is in all probability the comment of a too intelligent scribe. On the manuscript see Root, *The Textual Tradition of Chaucer's Troilus* (Chaucer Soc., 1916), p. 18.

The reference to the Furies as daughters of Night is probably due to *Met.*, IV, 451-52: "illa sorores Nocte vocat genitas." *RR.*, 17872-73 (ed. Michel, II, 200) is scarcely what was in Chaucer's mind, for Jean de Meun's word is "Forseneries" (see Cipriani, *PMLA*, XXII, 581; Fansler, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51). But sources for Chaucer's information on this point were abundant. To Fansler's references (p. 50, n. 4) add Boccaccio, *Gen. Deor.*, III, vi-ix (where the statement is iterated and reiterated); Servius (ed. Thilo and Hagen), I, 380, l. 25; II, 152, l. 16; 645, l. 20; Mythogr. II, cap. 12 (Bode, I, 77).

² Wise (*op. cit.*, p. 136) remarks: "The gloss *fure d'enfer*, found on the margin of MS Harl., 2392 at *Troilus*, I, 6, may be Chaucer's own and may have been taken from *Thèbes*, 510, *Tesiphone, fure d'enfer*." It is not likely to be Chaucer's own note. See above, note 1. The reference to the *Roman de Thèbes*, if it be such (which is doubtful), is pretty certainly the scribe's. I was thoroughly convinced, before I read Dr. Wise's monograph, of Chaucer's use of the *Roman de Thèbes*, but I do not believe that the gloss in Harl. 2392 affords evidence of it.

³ *T. & C.*, I, 6-14.

No less striking is the Franklin's statement regarding Aurelius, who

. . . . dorste nat his sorwe telle,
But *languisseth*, as a *furie dooth in helle*.¹

And with this belongs also F 1101:

In *langour* and in torment *furious*
Two yeer and more lay wreche Aurelius.²

This brings us to another group of passages that is significant. Proserpine, in the lines from Dante, is "*regina dell'eterno pianto*." It has long been recognized that Chaucer has this passage in mind in the *Hous of Fame*:

. . . . Proserpyne,
That *quene is of the derke pyne*.³

There are, however, two other passages which show the influence of these same lines of the *Inferno*, either directly, or through Chaucer's recollection of his own phraseology.

The deeth may wel out of my brest departe
The lyf, so longe may this sorwe myne;
But fro my soule shal Criseydes darte
Out never-mo; but *down with Proserpyne*,
When I am deed, I wol go wone *in pyne*;
And then I wol *eternally compleyne*
My wo, and how that twinned be we tweyne.⁴

Boccaccio has simply, for the lines that most concern us:

Questi con lui la mia alma merranno
Giù *nell' inferno all' ultimo martire*;
Quivi insieme Griseida *piangeranno*.⁵

"Down with Proserpyne" and "eternally compleyne" are, therefore, Chaucer's own. "Piangeranno" (in its context) may perhaps have helped to recall the passage in the *Inferno* to his mind.

A few lines farther on in the same book occurs the following stanza:

Myn herte and eek the woful goost ther-inne
Biquethe I, with your spirit *to compleyne*
Eternally, for they shul never twinne.

¹ F 949-50.

² Cf. F 448: "this *furial pyne of helle*."

³ *H.P.*, 1511-12. See Toynbee, *Dante in Eng. Lit.*, p. 9.

⁴ *T. & C.*, IV, 470-76.

⁵ *Fil.*, IV, 54, ll. 4-6.

For though in erthe y-twinned be we tweyne,
Yet in the feld of pitee, out of peyne,
 That hight Elysos, shul we been y-fere,
 As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.¹

In this case Chaucer has digressed for the moment from the *Filostrato*. But in the stanza of the *Filostrato* (IV, 91) which immediately follows the last one (IV, 90) that he did translate (in *Troilus*, IV, 778-79) occurs a phrase, "*e teco a lamentare Il partir doloroso*," which seems to have recalled "*insieme Griseida piangeranno*" in *Fil.*, IV, 54.² The result is a companion stanza to *Troilus*, IV, 470-76, above, with a repetition, in "compleyne Eternally," of Dante's "eterno pianto."

§ 10

I have quoted the last two stanzas in the preceding section at length because they have a possible bearing upon one of the most baffling problems in Chaucer. In the *Compleynte unto Pite*, Chaucer addresses Pity—or his lady regarded as pitiful—in the words:

Have mercy on me, *thou Herenus quene*,
 That you have sought so tenderly and yore.³

Professor Skeat, identifying Cruelty in the poem with Tisiphone and Pity with Pietas, regards "the struggle between Pity and Cruelty in Chaucer's poem [as] parallel to the struggle between Pietas and the fury Tisiphone as told in Statius."⁴ But the contest between Cruelty and Pity, as Skeat himself points out,⁵ is a commonplace in the poetry of courtly love, and the whole content of the *Compleynte* is leagues away from the grim and savage struggle in the *Thebaid*. Dr. Fansler⁶ has done notable service in bringing Chaucer's lines, on the other hand, into connection with the passage in the ninth canto of the *Inferno*. Certain considerations that arise out of what has been stated in § 9 may serve to strengthen his position.

¹ T. & C., IV, 785-91.

² See above.

³ Ll. 92-93.

⁴ *Oxford Chaucer*, I, 62; cf. 459-61. The passage in Statius is *Theb.*, XI, 457-96. Skeat's view is restated by Wise, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-41.

⁵ *Oxford Chaucer*, I, 459-60 (note on l. 64).

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 51.

In the first place, there can be no question that Chaucer identifies "Herenus quene" with *Pity*. The following lines are conclusive, if there were otherwise any doubt:

Pite, that I have sought so yore ago [l. 1].
 For I have sought hir ever ful besily [l. 33].
 Have mercy on me, thou Herenus quene,
 That you have sought so tenderly and yore [ll. 92-93].

In the second place, there can be little question that, as Fansler suggests, "Herenus quene" is *Proserpine*. The Erine are "le meschine Della regina dell'eterno pianto."¹ Chaucer, therefore, somehow identifies *Proserpine* and *Pity*. Why?

As a tentative suggestion, I should like to point out that in *Troilus*, IV, 789 (see § 9), the Elysian fields are called "the feld of pitee." Chaucer is here following, as Kittredge observes,² *Met.*, XI, 61-66, and his "feld of pitee" is Ovid's "arva piorum." I have already called attention to the striking and obviously intentional parallelism between this stanza and *Troilus*, IV, 470 ff. (quoted in § 9). It would be going too far to assert that there is a designed equation between "down with *Proserpyne*" and "in the feld of pitee." The "in peyne" of the one stanza and the "out of peyne" of the other seem to distinguish between the two regions of the underworld. But it is clear that Chaucer must have known *Proserpine* as the queen, not only of the rest of the underworld, but also of *Elysium*,³ and so of the realm of *mercy*. At all events, "Herenus quene" is also queen of the "feld of pitee."

It is possible, furthermore, that somehow *Proserpine* in her well-known guise of *Luna* or *Lucina* may have been in his mind. Precisely this identification Dante himself makes in the passage under discussion.⁴ And certainly line 94, "Let som stream of your

¹ Cf. A 2299: "Quene of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe"; E 2038-39: "he, Pluto, and his quene, Proserpina"; E 2229: "the quene Proserpyne." And cf. A 2081-82; F 1074-75.

² *PMLA*, XXIV, 352, n. 14. It is not probable (although, of course, possible) that Chaucer's modification of the phrase is due to a misunderstanding of the Latin.

³ He could have learned this (to mention one source only) from Claudian, *De Raptu Proserpinae*, II, 277-359. Indeed, ll. 302-4, in their context, might almost in themselves have given him the idea of *Proserpina* as "queen of pity."

⁴ Cf. *Inf.*, X, 79-80, "Ma non cinquanta volte fia raccesa La faccia della donna che qui regge," with IX, 44.

light on me be sene," seems to point to such a possibility here. That Chaucer knew that Luna, Lucina, and Proserpine were one and the same is proved (if proof were necessary) by F 1045 ff. (especially 1074-75).¹ Finally, the form "Herenus" suggests that the word was new to Chaucer himself,² and I suspect that the phrase may be among the very first of his responses to the influence of Dante.³ This feeling is strengthened by the relation between the *Compleynte unto Pite* and the so-called "Complaint to his Lady."⁴ For I cannot agree with Skeat⁵ that the "Complaint to his Lady" has nothing to do with the "Complaint of Pity." Even apart from the evidence of the manuscripts, the correspondences in phraseology and in spirit force one to the conclusion that the poems are companion pieces.⁶ And it is in the "Complaint to his Lady" that Chaucer's sole attempt at *terza rima* occurs.⁷ One may be fairly certain that Chaucer would not have waited long, after reading Dante, before trying his hand at the new meter. Both complaints are otherwise French through and through. It is at least a good guess, therefore, that the *terza rima* in the one and "Herenus quene" in the other represent Chaucer's first borrowings from Dante.

I doubt if a further fact (tempting as it is) has any bearing on the problem. But it is a fact that in the twentieth canto of the *Inferno* occurs the line:

Qui vive la pietà quando è ben morta.⁸

Dante, of course, did not mean what Chaucer means in the *Compleynte*. But the lay reader often enough misses Dante's point.

I have offered these tentative observations upon "Herenus quene" in the hope that they may perhaps afford a clue to someone else, who may completely solve the problem.

¹ Cf. also A 2081-85, 2296-99. He could have learned it from innumerable sources.

² Or to Adam Scrivener?

³ If so, Chaucer *may* have misunderstood "pianto" as meaning "pity."

⁴ No. VI among the Minor Poems in Skeat's edition.

⁵ *Oxford Chaucer*, I, 526.

⁶ Cf. II, 64-70, VI, 28-32; II, 99-101, VI, 47-49; II, 108, VI, 50; II, 110, VI, 56; II, 113, VI, 97 ff.; II, 114-15, VI, 118-19; II, 111-12, VI, 97 (and *passim*).

⁷ VI, 14-43.

⁸ *Inf.*, XX, 28.

§ 11

A peculiarly interesting convergence of reminiscences, involving once more a fusion of Boccaccio and Dante, occurs in the Proem to *Anelida and Arcite*. It has long been recognized that Chaucer's three stanzas are based on the first three stanzas (in reverse order) of the *Teseide*. But that is only part of the story. For it has not been observed that Chaucer has, for one thing, combined with the first stanza of the first book of the *Teseide* the sixty-third stanza of the eleventh book.¹ I shall quote the pertinent lines of each.

O *Sorelle* Castalie, che *nel monte*
Elicona contente dimorate
 D'intorno al sacro gorgoneo fonte,
Sottesso l'ombra delle frondi amate
Da Febo. . . .²

Un bello scudo e di molto valore,
 Nel quale si vedea *Marsia* sonando,
 Sè con Apollo nel sonar provando.³
 Vedeasi appresso superar Pitone,
 E quindi sotto *l'ombre graziose*
Sopra Parnaso presso all' Elicone
Fonte seder con le nove amorse
Muse, e cantar maestrevol canzone.⁴

Be favorable eek, thou Polymnia,
 On Parnaso, that, with thy sustres glade,
 By *Elicon*, not fer from Cirrea,
 Singest with vois memorial in the shade,
 Under the laurer which that may not fade,
 And do that I my ship to haven winne.⁵

That the one passage in the *Teseide* should recall the other was inevitable,⁶ considering their references in common to Apollo,

¹ This stanza describes the device on a shield included among the gifts that accompanied the funeral games in honor of Arcita.

² *Tes.*, I, 1, ll. 1-4. See *Oxford Chaucer*, I, 530. As before, however, I am following the Moutier text.

³ I am quoting the last lines of stanza 62 for a purpose that will appear later.

⁴ *Tes.*, XI, 62, ll. 6-8; 63, ll. 1-5.

⁵ A. & A., 15-20.

⁶ There are some very significant borrowings from the *Teseide* on Chaucer's part that have passed unobserved, and a study of the way in which he draws upon the poem demonstrates his thorough familiarity with every part of it. I shall give very soon the evidence for the additional borrowings referred to.

Helicon, and the Muses, and the recurrence of the phrase "sottesso [sotto] l'ombra [l'ombre]." The conjunction of Parnassus and Helicon is therefore Boccaccio's, not Chaucer's.

But in all probability it was not Boccaccio's alone. For in neither stanza does Boccaccio refer to "Cirrea."¹ It is necessary to adventure for a moment among the amazing aberrations of mediaeval geography. For Chaucer's series of blunders in placing Helicon on Parnassus, and in confusing Cirra with Cirrhea² is not to be laid to his account. The recognized authorities of his day (including in this case Boccaccio) must bear the blame. For we err naïvely when we assume that Chaucer drew his classical information at all times directly from the fountainhead. Like most of his contemporaries, he was largely indebted to the mass of misinformation provided in the accepted commentaries, and through them, current in his century.³ And the passage before us is a case in point. Servius, in his comment on *Aen.*, VII, 641, glosses "Helicone deae": "Parnasus, *mons Thessaliae*, dividitur in *Cithaeronum Liberi et Heliconem Apollinis*, cuius sunt musae."⁴ Lactantius, commenting on *Theb.*, I, 62, remarks: "*Cirrhaea* ista enim civitas *juxta Parnasum* est montem, qui in duo juga dividitur, in *Heliconem et Cithaeronem*."⁵ Cirrha is also "*prope Parnasum*" in Lactantius.⁶ Chaucer's "not fer from Cirrea" seems, therefore, to hail from some such source.⁷ But Lactantius himself fails to stick to any of his three points, for his comment on *Theb.*, VII, 347 is as follows: "Parnasus mons est Phocidis, qui in duo juga dividitur id est in *Cirrham et Nysam*. *Cirrha* ergo etiam civitas dicitur circa montem Parnasum posita."⁸

¹ He does, however, mention "Parnaso Cirreo" in *Tes.*, VIII, 57, and it is barely possible that this was in Chaucer's mind.

² See below.

³ Several of Chaucer's other slips go back to these "learned" sources.

⁴ Ed. Thilo and Hagen, II, 176. So also: "'per Parnasi ardua' *Heliconem et Cithaeronem*, montes musis dicatos" (*ibid.*, III, 298).

⁵ Ed. Jahnke, p. 8. Even Boccaccio recognizes Cithaeron as part of Parnassus: "Citheron boetiae mons est poetarum carminibus celeberrimus. . . . Aliqui partem Parnasi putant a citherone quodam denominatum" (*De Montibus*, s.v. "Citheron").

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 167 (cf. also next quotation below). And see Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, ed. Kopp, pp. 39-40, 533.

⁷ See also p. 727, below.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 363. Cf. p. 395 (comment on "ceu te Cirrhaeo" of *Theb.*, VIII, 331): "monte Parnaso, quia in *Cirrha parte montis ipsius* hiatus terrae est, ubi responsa Delphica dabuntur." Boccaccio (*De Montibus*, s.v. "Cirra") describes Cirra as that peak of Parnassus which is sacred to Apollo. And so Dante (see below) obviously understands it.

In the thirteenth-century *I Fatti di Cesare* the confusion becomes worse confounded. Appius goes "in su uno alto monte di Grecia, che avea nome Parnasio, che v'à due poggi, l'uno si chiamo Licons, che è alto in fino a le nuville, e l'altro Cicero. Apollo e Baccas, due Dii de' Saracini, vi s'adoravano."¹ We have already seen that Parnassus is "mons *Thessaliae*."² It is also "mons *Boeotiae*,"³ and mons *Phocidis*.⁴ Even Macrobius locates it in Boeotia: "item Boeotii Parnassum montem Apollini sacratum esse memorantes," etc.⁵ Worse still, Boccaccio himself puts it there! In the *Teseide*, Arcita, going from Athens to Thebes, "cominciò ad entrare In quel che già felice assai poteo, Cioè in Beozia; e dopo alquanto andare, Parnaso avendo dietro a sè lasciato, Alla distrutta Tebe fu arrivato."⁶ And since Lactantius recognizes it as in both Phocis and Boeotia,⁷ he manfully cuts the Gordian knot: "'Despectat Phocida' de jugo Cirrhae vidit bustum suum, quod fuerat in Phocide. Cirrha Boeotiae planities est. . . . Phocis ergo Boeotia est"(!)⁸ Finally, Junius Philargyrius places Aganippe in Thrace,⁹ while Lactantius confounds Hippocrene and the Castalian fount.¹⁰ "No wonder"—Chaucer might well exclaim to his modern critics—"No wonder is a lewed man to ruste!"

But the immediate suggestion for "Cirrea" in *Anelida* came probably from another source. Few pages of the *Divine Comedy* seem to have made a deeper impression upon Chaucer than the first part of the first canto of the *Paradiso*:

¹ Ed. Banchi (*Collezione di Opere Inedite o Rare*), p. 153. The pages that follow are no less remarkable.

² Not only in Servius, but also in one text of Junius Philargyrius. See ed. Thilo and Hagen (as above), III², 178.

³ Lactantius, p. 145. So also in the other text of Junius Philargyrius, on the same page as above.

⁴ Lactantius, p. 363; Probus, ed. Thilo and Hagen, III², 367.

⁵ *Sat.*, I, xviii, 3.

⁶ *Tes.*, IV, 12, ll. 4-8. In *De Montibus* Boccaccio gives it correctly as "phocidis mons." The *Ovide moralisé*, like the *Teseide*, places it "Entre Athenes et Thebes" (I, 1945-58). In *Mythogr.* III, cap. 15, § 7 (Bode, I, 255) it is "juxta Thebas." So also in the *Ovide moralisé* (II, 385) it is "juste Thebes."

⁷ See notes 3 and 4 above.

⁸ P. 84. Accordingly, Lactantius makes *Cithaeron* (see above) "mons Boeotiae" (pp. 85, 264 ["juxta Thebes"]). Helicon, by the same token, must also find place there (p. 194). That he is this time right is accidental.

⁹ Ed. Thilo and Hagen, III², 179.

¹⁰ P. 315.

O buono Apollo, all'ultimo lavoro
 Fammi del tuo valor sì fatto vaso,
 Come domandi a dar l'amato alloro.
 Infino a qui l'un giogo di Parnaso
 Assai mi fu, ma or con ambedue
 M'è uopo entrar nell'aringo rimaso.
 Entra nel petto mio, e spira tue
 Sì come quando Marsia traesti
 Della vagina delle membra sue. . . .
 Venir vedra'mi al tuo diletto legno,
 E coronarmi allor di quelle foglie
 Che la materia e tu mi farai degno
 Che partorir letizia in sulla lieta
 Delfica deità dovria la fronda
 Peneia, quando alcun di sè asseta.
 Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda:
 Forse retro da me con miglior voci
 Si pregherà perchè Cirra risponda.¹

Now to anyone familiar with Canto I, Boccaccio's "*frondi amate Da Febo*" must almost inevitably have recalled Dante's "*l'amato alloro*" and his "*la fronda Peneia*" (not to speak of "*tuo diletto legno*"), while the reference to "Marsia" is common to both.² The passage once remembered, the insertion of "Cirrea" (however troubled by the contagion of the commentators)³ is in the right Chaucerian vein. And the suggestion that the mention of "Cirrea" is immediately due to Chaucer's recollection of Dante is borne out by the fact that "glade" (which scarcely translates "*contente*")⁴ seems to be transferred to the Muses from the "*lieta*" of *Par.*, I, 31, and that Boccaccio's "*frondi amate*" has become specifically "*l'amato alloro*" of *Par.*, I, 15.

¹ *Par.*, I, 13-21, 25-27, 31-36. Chaucer returns to the opening lines of the canto again and again in the *Hous of Fame*. *HF.*, 1091-93 = *Par.*, I, 13; 1101-3 = I, 22-24; 1107-8 = I, 25-27; 1109 = I, 19; 1229 ff. = I, 19-21; 524-25 = I, 11; cf. 505-6 = I, 62-63. And *T. & C.*, IV, 776 = *Par.*, I, 21. As for *Anelida and Arotie*, Skeat suggests tentatively, in his note on A. & A., l. 17, that Chaucer may have had *Par.*, I, 16, 36 in mind, and Toynbee (*Dante in Eng. Lit.*, p. xvi, n. 1) also notes the possibility.

² I am not imagining all this. It is what happens constantly to everyone who reads at all, and in the case of a tenacious memory like Chaucer's it is inevitable. See § 1 above. Far too little attention has been paid, in studying Chaucer's borrowings, to the association of ideas that frequently led to them.

³ Dante, of course, is referring to the peak of Parnassus so called.

⁴ See below, p. 731, for Chaucer's actual rendering of "*contente dimorate*."

There is, however, still further evidence that the first canto of the *Paradiso* enters into Chaucer's fabric. The lines (7-9) just preceding those already quoted are as follows:

Perchè, appressando sè al suo disire,
Nostro intelletto si profonda tanto,
Che retro la memoria non può ire.

The second stanza of *Anelida* begins:

For hit *ful depe is sonken in my minde.*

And it ends:

Hath nigh *devoured out of our memorie.*

And what is between exemplifies once more how Chaucer's imagination hovered creatively over his remembered reading. Dante's eighth line ("nostro intelletto," etc.) has taken the place of the opening words of the *second* stanza ("E' m'è venuta voglia")¹ of the *Teseide*, the rest of which Chaucer now begins freely to translate:

E' m'è venuta voglia con pietosa
 Rima di scriver *una storia antica,*
*Tanto negli anni riposta e nascosa.*²

But at once he is off on another track! For the words that I have italicized have recalled to him a passage from *Boethius*, which he proceeds to paraphrase:

But how many a man, that was ful *noble* in his tyme, hath the wrecched and nedy *for yetinge of wryteres* put out of minde and don away! Al be it so that, certes, thilke wrytinges profiten litel; the whiche wrytinges *long and derk elde doth away*, bothe hem and eek hir autours.³

That *elde*, which that al can frete and byte,
 As hit hath freten mony a *noble storie*,
*Hath nigh devoured out of our memorie.*⁴

And in these last three lines Boethius (in "elde," "noble," and the general idea), Boccaccio (in the retention of "storia"), and Dante (in the emphasis upon "memoria") are all present.

¹ See *Oxford Chaucer*, I, 530. I am quoting from the Moutier edition of the *Teseide*. Skeat's "chē" seems to be a slip.

² See *A. & A.*, II, 9-10.

³ Bk. II, pr. vii, 95-102. The Latin text is: "Sed quam multos clarissimos suis temporibus viros scriptorum inops delevit oblivio! Quamquam quid ipsa scripta proficiunt, quae cum suis auctoribus premit longior atque obscura vetustas?" I am not aware that this parallel has been noted, but I have not access at the moment to all the editions of the *Minor Poems*.

⁴ *A. & A.*, II, 12-14.

But why should Chaucer invoke *Polyhymnia* among the Muses? For one thing, of course, because of Dante's "memoria" in the preceding line.¹ But there is probably an additional association of ideas. Toynbee² compares *Anelida*, 15-16 ("Polymnia . . . with thy sustres") with *Par.*, XXIII, 56 ("Polinnia con le suore"). This tentative suggestion attains practical conclusiveness when we examine the contexts of the two passages. Chaucer has in mind, as he writes with Boccaccio and Boethius before him, the idea of stories *forgotten in old books*, and also the association with the "*Sorelle Castalie*" and the "*frondi amate*." The twenty-third canto of the *Paradiso* opens with the line:

Come l'augello intra l'amate fronde.³

And the lines immediately preceding the mention of Polyhymnia are as follows:

Io era come quei che si risente
Di vision obblita, e che s'ingegna
Indarno di ridurlasi alla mente,
 Quando io udi' questa profferta, degna
Di tanto grado, che mai non si estingue
Del libro che il preterito rassegna.
 Se mo sonasser tutte quelle lingue
 Che *Polinnia con le suore fero*, etc.⁴

Had he tried, Chaucer could scarcely have helped recalling the passage, and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the appeal to "Polymnia . . . with [her] sustres" represents the interweaving of another reminiscence of the *Paradiso*.⁵

¹ Cf. Boccaccio, *Gen. Deor.*, XI, ii: "Quinta Polymnia, quasi polim, id est, *multam memoriam faciens* dicimus: quia post capacitatem est *memoria necessaria*." Cf. "vois memorial" (l. 18). See also Mythogr. I, cap. 114 (Bode, I, 36), Mythogr. II, cap. 24 (Bode, I, 82), Mythogr. III, cap. 8, § 18 (Bode, I, 210).

² *Dante in Eng. Lit.*, p. xvi, n. 1.

³ The *terzina* continues: "Posato al nido dei suoi dolci nati, *La notte che le cose ci nasconde*." Cf. Boccaccio's "negli anni riposta e nascosa."

⁴ *Par.*, XXIII, 49-56.

⁵ The figure of the ship in *Anelida*, 20, is, as Skeat rightly designates it, "a common simile." It is, however, at least worth noting that the second canto of the *Paradiso* opens with the same figure. And with it *Minerva* (who appears in Chaucer's fifth line), as well as Apollo and the *Muses*, is directly brought into connection (*Par.*, II, 1-3, 8-9). *Pallas* finds no place in any of the stanzas from Boccaccio, where instead it is *Venus* who is associated with Mars (see § 12 below). The substitution of Pallas for Venus may, accordingly, have been suggested by Dante. I should, however, lay little stress on this possibility, since the link in this instance is more likely to have been through the mediaeval confusion of Pallas and *Bellona* (l. 5). See Boccaccio, *Gen. Deor.*, V, xlviii: "Minerva . . . a nonnullis Bellona appellata est: et soror Martis."

Finally, Dante appears at least once again in *Anelida*. For "the poynt of remembraunce"¹ is Dante's "la puntura della rimem-branza."²

§ 12

Twice again in Chaucer occurs the same fusion of the same two stanzas of Boccaccio considered in the last section. And in both cases the lines are again interwoven with reminiscences of Dante.

The first is in *Troilus*:

Thou lady bright, *the doughter to Dione*,
Thy blinde and winged *sone eek*, daun *Cupyde*;
Ye sustren nyne eek, *that by Elicone*
In hil Parnaso listen for to abyde.³

It should be observed, in the first place, that this is not mere recollection on Chaucer's part of his own words in *Anelida*. For there is included here the invocation to Venus and Cupid from the third stanza of the *Teseide*, which does not appear in *Anelida* at all:

E tu, Madre d'Amor, col tuo giocondo
E lieto aspetto, e 'l tuo Figliuol veloce
Co' dardi suoi possenti in ogni mondo.⁴

And Chaucer here translates Boccaccio's "contente dimorate"⁵ ("listen for to abyde"), which he omits in *Anelida*.

But once again he has supplemented the *Teseide* by Dante. For Boccaccio's lines (perhaps through their juxtaposition of "madre" and "figliuol") have recalled another passage in the *Paradiso*, which in any case would have been likely to occur to Chaucer as he resumed at the close of the third book of the *Troilus* the invocation to Venus with which it opened:⁶

Solea creder lo mondo in suo periclo
Che la bella Ciprigna il folle amore
Raggiasse volta nel terzo epicielo. . . .⁷

¹ Ll. 211, 350.

² *Purg.*, XII, 20. See Toynbee, *Dante in Eng. Lit.*, p. xvi.

³ *T. & C.*, III, 1807-10.

⁴ *Tes.*, I, 3, ll. 3-5.

⁵ See above, pp. 725, 728.

⁶ "Lady bright" in l. 1807 looks back to "lady bright" in l. 39.

⁷ Cf. *T. & C.*, III, 2.

Ma Dione onoravano e Cupido,
 Questa per madre sua, questo per figlio,
 E dicean ch'ei sedette in grembo a Dido.¹

It should be remembered that the name Dione in *Ovid* (as in Dante, *Par.*, XXII, 144) is applied to Venus herself.² Chaucer could have guessed at the relationship, to be sure, from *Aen.*, III, 19 ff., or from *De Raptu*, IV, 102, and it is explicit in Boccaccio, *Gen. Deor.*, XI, iv. Servius, too, is sound on this point (I, 339). But the passage in Dante accounts for every detail, and Dante was very definitely in Chaucer's mind as he wrote this part of the *Troilus*.³ "Lady bright," accordingly, harks back to *Troilus*, III, 39; "doughter to Dione" and "sone . . . Cupyde" to *Tes.*, I, 3, ll. 3-5 and *Par.*, VIII, 7-8; the next line and a half to *Tes.*, XI, 63, ll. 3-5 and *Tes.*, I, 1, l. 1; and the remainder of the last line to *Tes.*, I, 1, l. 2. Chaucer, in a word, is doing here precisely what Milton does throughout *Lycidas*.⁴ It is not necessary to suppose that either poet was fully conscious of the processes of association that were going on in his mind. Phrases, now from this familiar passage, now from that, recalled each other, came together, and coalesced. The phenomenon can be paralleled again and again.

The second instance of a similar fusion is in the *Hous of Fame*:

Now faire blisful, O *Cipris*,
 So be my favour at this tyme!
 And ye, me to endyte and ryme
 Helpeth, *that on Parnaso dwelle*
By Elicon the clere welle.⁵

The invocation to Venus, in the light of what we have already seen, almost certainly recalls *Tes.*, I, 3. The last two lines are obviously from *Tes.*, XI, 63⁶—even to the "*Elicone fonte*." For it

¹ *Par.*, VIII, 1-3, 7-9.

² See *Amores*, I, xiv, 33; *Ars Am.*, II, 593; III, 769; *Fasti*, II, 461-63; V, 309.

³ Among other passages, see *T. & C.*, III, 1262-63 = *Par.*, XXXIII, 14-18; III, 1389-91 = *Purg.*, XX, 106-8, 116-17; III, 1419-20 = *Purg.*, XIX, 4; III, 1625-28 = (perhaps) *Inf.*, V, 121-23; III, 1693 = (perhaps) *Par.*, XIX, 8; IV, 22-24 = *Inf.*, IX, 43-48; IV, 25 = (perhaps) *Par.*, VIII, 131-32; IV, 225 ff. = *Inf.*, III, 112-14; IV, 473-75 = *Inf.*, IX, 43-48; IV, 776 = *Par.*, I, 21; etc.

⁴ See a significant article by Sir John Edwin Sandys on "The Literary Sources of Milton's *Lycidas*" (*Transactions R. S. L.*, vol. XXXII).

⁵ *HF.*, 518-22.

⁶ For both, see above, p. 725.

is now plain that the *immediate* source of this particular error is not Dante, but Boccaccio.¹ Of course "Metamorphoseos" should have taught Chaucer better, since Ovid has: ". . . virgineumque Helicon petiit. quo monte," etc.,² and in the following lines the distinction between the mountain and the spring is clear. But the notions of the mediaeval commentators covered the bright face of the classics with a cloud. It is Boccaccio and the commentators, accordingly, who have here led Chaucer astray. But the immediate context of this passage is steeped, like the rest, in reminiscences of Dante,³ including two others of Dante's invocations to the Muses!⁴ Did Chaucer perhaps keep a Commonplace Book, and was there a crowded page *sub voce* "Musae"?

§ 13

The invocation to the "Herines," discussed in § 9, ends with an appeal to Mars:⁵

Thou cruel *Mars* eek, *fader to Quiryne*.

This ilke ferthe book me helpeth fyne.⁶

Skeat, in his note on the lines, refers to Ovid, *Fasti*, II, 419, 476, where Chaucer could have learned that Quirinus was Romulus, and that Romulus and Remus were sons of Mars. Kittredge⁷ refers the line to *Met.*, XV, 863: "invicti genitor Gradiue Quirini." Wise⁸

¹ That Dante strengthened Chaucer in his erroneous belief, however, we may be sure. See for example, *Purg.*, XXIX, 40: "Or convien ch'*Elicon* per me versi." Moreover, since it is now clear that Chaucer, like most of his contemporaries, identified Helicon and Parnassus, it is easy to see how he would misunderstand certain other passages in Dante, especially *Purg.*, XXXI, 140-41: "Chi pallido si fece sotto l'ombra S'i di Parnaso, o beve in sua cisterna;" or *Purg.*, XXII, 64-65: "Tu prima m'invisti Verso Parnaso a ber nelle sue grotte." Cf. *De Vulg. Eloq.*, II, iv, 67: "prius *Helicone* potatus." Lactantius (p. 358) makes Helicon a stream: ". . . et commemorat fluvios Musis dicatos: *Heliconium*, *Permessum*, *Olmium*."

² *Met.*, V, 254.

³ *HF.*, 524 = *Par.*, I, 11 (pointed out by Klaeber—*op. cit.*, pp. 113, 394—who also called attention to the association of ideas between *Par.*, I, 11 and *Inf.*, II, 8, in Chaucer's preceding line, through the word "mente"); *HF.*, 523 = *Inf.*, II, 8; 526 = *Inf.*, II, 9; 528 = *Par.*, XVIII, 87—the last three borrowings all noted by Skeat.

⁴ *Inf.*, II, 7-9; *Par.*, XVIII, 82-87.

⁵ Mars and the Furies are also associated in *Troilus*, II, 435-36. In this case, however, Chaucer is clearly recalling the phraseology of the *Teseide*. See Cummings, *The Indebtedness of Chaucer's Works to the Italian Works of Boccaccio* (University of Cincinnati Studies, Vol. X, Part 2, 1916), pp. 55, 71.

⁶ *T. & C.*, IV, 25-26.

⁷ *PMLA*, XXIV, 352, n. 2.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

observes that Mars is called *saevus* in *Theb.*, VII, 703, and also calls attention to *Met.*, XV, 863. There is, however, another possibility.

In the discussion of heredity in the eighth canto of the *Paradiso*, Carlo Martello declares:

Quinci addivien ch'Esau si diparte
Per seme da Jacob, e vien Quirino
Da sì vil padre che si rende a Marte.¹

There can be no question that Ovid's phrase in *Met.*, XV, 863, is sufficient in itself to account for Chaucer's line. But I am inclined to think that Dante's words were in Chaucer's mind—perhaps, as so often, along with Ovid's²—because another phrase of the discourse in the *Paradiso* seems to have clung to his memory.

In the explanation of the mystery of heredity Carlo refers to *the active virtue of the spheres* as "the seal upon the mortal wax":

La circular natura, ch'è suggello
Alla cera mortal.³

The Wife of Bath, it will be remembered, expatiates in characteristic vein upon *the influence of the heavens*—the "vertu of my constellacioun"—that made *her* what she was.⁴ And the famous line:

I hadde the prente of seynt Venus seel,

seems, in the light of its context, to hark back to Dante's figure.⁵ It is from this same canto, it should be observed, that Chaucer drew the phraseology of his reference to the daughter of Dione and Cupid her son.⁶

§ 14

In the somewhat notorious account in the *Hous of Fame* of "Marcia that lost her skin," Chaucer has left out Dante's most vivid and characteristic phrase. He is combining, as it happens, Dante and Ovid.⁷ The three passages are as follows:

Entra nel petto mio, e spira tue
Sì come quando Marsia traesti
Della vagina delle membre sue.⁸

¹ *Par.*, VIII, 130–32.

² See, for example, the next section below.

³ *Par.*, VIII, 127–28. Cf. *Purg.*, XXXIII, 79.

⁴ D 604–20.

⁵ Professor Barnouw's extremely interesting communication in the *Nation* of Dec. 7, 1916 (vol. 103, no. 2684, p. 540) on "The Prente of Seinte Venus Seel" deals with an entirely different aspect of the subject.

⁶ See § 12 above. ⁷ See Kittredge, *PMLA*, XXIV, 352, n. 11. ⁸ *Par.*, I, 19–21.

Clamanti *cutis est* summos *direpta* per artus,
 nec quicquam nisi vulnus erat; cruor undique manat,
 detectique patent nervi, trepidaeque *sine ulla*
pelle micant venae. . . .¹

And Marcia that lost her skin,
 Both in face, body, and chin,
 For that she wolde envyen, lo!
 To pypen bet then Apollo.²

The reminiscence of Ovid has displaced the supremely Dantesque
 "traesti della vagina delle membre sue."

But the phrase stuck in Chaucer's memory. For it appears
 (as does not seem to have been noted) in the *Troilus*:

Than shal no mete or drinke come in me
 Til I my soule out of my breste unshethe.³

There are a few other parallels which I shall have to reserve for
 treatment later, and I feel sure that the list is by no means complete.
 My present object is attained if I have made it clear that the influence
 of Dante upon Chaucer is even more pervasive and significant than
 has been commonly supposed.

JOHN LIVINGSTON LOWES

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¹ *Met.*, VI, 387-90.

² *HF.*, 1229-32.

³ *T. & C.*, IV, 775-76. The *Filostrato* (IV, 89) has simply: "E se per sè non sen
 va la smarrita Anima fuor del corpo."